

# Rural Power

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### KEC's Larry Detwiler earns Certified Utility Safety Professional certification

After classroom training and a 120 question, closed-book test, KEC's Director of Loss Control, Safety and Compliance (LCS&C), Larry Detwiler, is a certified utility safety professional (CUSP).

Detwiler has been at KEC since 1991, where he first started as a safety instructor. Prior to his current position, Detwiler worked at Ninnescaw Electric Cooperative. While at the co-op, he progressed from apprentice lineman, to journeyman, to lead lineman, and finally to safety coordinator.

In September, Detwiler voluntarily participated in the certification process to earn the new designation.

"The certification refocuses



Larry Detwiler

me on regulations and standards that I don't typically deal with on a day-to-day basis," he said. "It's very beneficial."

To achieve this honor, Detwiler had to first be approved to take the refresher course. In order to be approved, his job experience and safety training were reviewed.

Detwiler was one of 12 individuals who took the course in Kansas City, KS. The course was immediately followed with a timed test. Participants were given two hours to complete the exam.

The purpose of the CUSP is to promote safety leadership within the industry. In order to keep his certification, Detwiler will pay an annual fee and will host planning safety meetings

as well as continuing professional development programs for himself.

An estimated 25 people have earned the CUSP designation in Kansas.

"I hope you will join me in congratulating Larry for earning this important professional designation" said Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO. "It is another demonstration of the dedication of our professional staff in assuring they provide expertise and value to the membership."

Earlier this year, Todd Bailey, KEC's LCS&C Instructor, earned his Certified Loss Control Professional certification.

In addition, the LCS&C department worked with a group of members to update the training catalog available to participating members.

### Grassroots, day-ahead markets featured at KEC District Meetings

Cooperative trustees and managers met with KEC staff during a tour of four annual KEC District Meetings held Nov. 4-8 in Topeka, Hays, Dodge City and Wichita.

The meeting agenda included a departmental and budget presentation by KEC staff, as well as a legislative update, a discussion on KEC's grassroots program, and a safety presentation.

One of the featured topics was the "day-ahead" (or "Day 2") markets. Shawn Geil, KEPCo's Director of Information Systems, gave this presentation for Districts 1 and 2, and Corey Linville, Sunflower's Vice President of Power Supply & Delivery, presented at Districts 3 and 4.



Congressman Tim Huelskamp speaks to co-op officials at the KEC District Meeting in Hays.

Guest speakers at the various meetings included Congressman Tim Huelskamp, state legislators including Senator Dan Kerschen, Representatives Sue Boldra, Ron Ryckman, Sr., Russ Jennings, Kyle Hoffman, John Ewy and Joe Seiwert, and other officials such as Thad Geiger, Business Develop-

ment Coordinator at the Kansas Department of Agriculture, and Pat George, Secretary at the Kansas Department of Commerce & Housing.

The meetings were also intended to take comments on the proposed KEC Budget. That input will be taken to the KEC Budget and Operations Committee before the final budget is presented to the KEC Board on Dec. 5.

## KEC's Bruce Graham testifies at EPA Hearing

Kansas co-op officials testified on Nov. 4 at the EPA Region 7 hearings on proposed Clean Air Act restrictions on power plant carbon emissions. The hearings, held at the EPA offices in Lenexa, attracted more than 400 people. KEC's Bruce Graham and Sunflower's Wayne Penrod were among more than 100 people slated to testify.

While there was a solid presence from opponents to the proposed carbon restrictions, advocates for shutting down coal were numerous.

"We did have good regional electric cooperative and industry utility representation," Graham said. "There was opposition to the proposed restrictions from labor and some public concern about economic impact and higher utility rates, as well."

## Roberts bill to protect pensions for rural co-ops passes out of committee

Sen. Pat Roberts' legislation to protect pensions for rural cooperatives passed out of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee with broad bipartisan support. The Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act of 2013 was introduced in July by Roberts and U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the HELP Committee. Kansas Senator Jerry Moran was also an early supporter of the bill.

This legislation ensures that co-ops and charitable associations are not swept into the Pension Protection Act of 2006 funding rules, which would require them to divert funds from critical services and jeopardize their ability to provide pension benefits to their workers. Because of their unique structure, these groups have been exempt from current law since 2006. Roberts' bill preserves this exemption.

ROBERTS NEWS RELEASE –  
10/30/13

## NOVEMBER

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|-------|--|
| 8     | District 1 Meeting, Marriott Hotel, 9100 E. Corporate Hills Drive, Wichita, 10 a.m.  |
| 14    | MDM Meeting, KEC Headquarters, Topeka  |
| 15    | Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays   |
| 19    | Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council Annual Meeting, Marriott Hotel, Wichita   |
| 20    | KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m., Annual Meeting at 4 p.m., reception at 5 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m., Prairie Band Casino and Resort, 12305 150th Road, Mayetta |
| 21    | KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, Prairie Band Casino and Resort, 8:30 a.m.   |
| 28-29 | Thanksgiving – KEC Office Closed   |

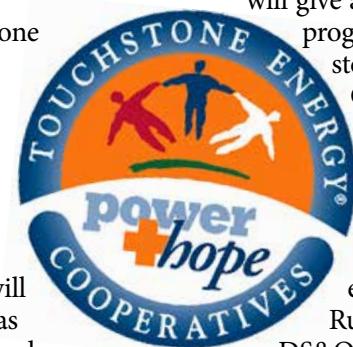
## Kansas Touchstone Energy to hold annual meeting, select award recipient

The deadline for the Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council's new employee recognition program is fast-approaching. Nominations are due by Nov. 15.

The Kansas Touchstone Energy Power & Hope Employee Recognition Program honors co-op staff who have gone the extra mile to help others.

After the Nov. 15 deadline, nominations will be reviewed at the Kansas Touchstone Energy Annual Meeting on Nov. 19. The winner(s) will be honored at KEC's Annual Meeting in January.

The Touchstone Energy Annual



Membership Meeting will be held at the Wichita Marriott on Tues., Nov. 19, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Amy Rosier, Touchstone Energy, will give an update on the national program activities. The Touchstone Energy Executive Council will discuss statewide activities, set the 2014 dues assessment, and hold elections.

The committee members whose terms expire this year include Perry Rubart, Pioneer; Don Hellwig, DS&O; and Jerry King, Victory. If you are interested in serving on the Executive Council, please contact Don Hellwig. For a Power & Hope nomination form, contact KEC's Shana Read.

## jobmarket

### KEC seeks Oil Circuit Recloser Assistant

KEC has an immediate opening for the position of an Oil Circuit Recloser (OCR) Assistant.

This position is based in Osage City. Responsibilities include maintenance, repair, testing and application of oil circuit reclosers.

Applicants must have a high school diploma. Knowledge of the various types of electrical distribution equipment and familiarity with NESC and OSHA regulations is desired. Extensive travel in Kansas and nearby states as well as the ability to lift and carry weight is required. Must have good communication, strong interpersonal and collaboration skills.

For a complete job description or to apply, please contact Angela Howard at [ahoward@kec.org](mailto:ahoward@kec.org) or call (785) 478-4554.

### Sumner-Cowley seeks Member Services Representative

Sumner-Cowley, Wellington, seeks skilled communicator to produce newsletters, social media and public relations campaigns, multimedia presentations and a company website.

Qualifications include a degree in journalism, communications, or related field. Necessary skills include superior writing and interpersonal skills; proficiency in desktop publishing, word processing, social networking, website development, multimedia presentations and photography.

Since 1938, Sumner-Cowley has provided electric service to rural areas in Sumner, Cowley, Harper, Sedgewick and Kingman counties.

Send cover letter, resume, and references to Coni Adams at [coni@sumcoop.com](mailto:coni@sumcoop.com).

## Midwest Energy linemen compete in International Lineman's Rodeo

Midwest Energy's lineman competed in the International Lineman's Rodeo.

Midwest Energy sent three teams to Bonner Springs on Oct. 19. They competed alongside more than 200 teams representing four countries at the 30th annual International Lineman's Rodeo.

The teams take part in four events based on traditional lineman tasks and skills. The teams are judged on their procedures by experts from other utilities.

This year, Midwest Energy sent two journeyman teams and one seniors team to the competition. The co-op also sent two apprentices. Mike Stremel, Midwest Energy's Operations Training Manager, commented that the apprentices were glad to compete as it is a huge learning experience.

Stremel, who organized the teams, said, "We had two teams get deducted



Midwest Energy sent three teams to the International Lineman's Rodeo in Bonner Springs on October 19. The teams had nearly perfect scores.

fewer than two points on a scale of 400. That's how tough the competition was."

Despite not bringing home an award, Stremel said that the event is valuable both for the training and the solidarity built among the participating linemen.

Next year will be the 31st year for the rodeo. The first Lineman's Rodeo was held in September 1984, with 12 participating teams from Kansas and Missouri.

## Brown-Atchison names Jim Currie as new manager

Brown-Atchison Electric Cooperative's board has named Jim Currie as Manager.

Currie has been with the co-op since 1978. He started as an apprentice lineman, became a lineman, and then crew foreman. In 2006, Currie became operations manager.

"There will be a lot of changes, a lot I have to learn [as manager]," Currie said. "I have been here for a while, so I feel like I have a good relationship with our members that will help with my transition."

Currie knows that co-ops are unique. "I grew up on a small farm, so the co-op way of life has always been a way of life for me. It's special," said Currie. "I see people on the street – I know them and they know me," he added. "The bigger companies don't have that. It's one of the major things I appreciate about a co-op."



Jim Currie

## LJEC linemen participate in Federated's safety video shoot

Video crews were "on location" at LJEC to shoot an electric safety video.

The video crew included employees from Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange.

Federated is adding new footage to their video safety library. As regulations change, videos become outdated and it is important to update materials. LJEC's John Malone and Zane Peak will be featured in the upcoming safety videos.

"LJEC was accommodating to allow us to shoot videos with two of their linemen," said Stan Bray, Federated's Safety & Loss Prevention representative, who was part of the video crew. "We want these videos to address linemen's safety issues by linemen, not actors."

The crew shot three videos during the project. Topics included wheel chalk safety, outrigger pad safety and trailer connection safety. While these issues may sound basic, Bray believes it is important to have material readily available as a refresher on how things are supposed to be done to maintain a safe work environment.



Above: an artist's rendering of the proposed facility for Twin Valley.

Twin Valley's board has approved the construction of a new facility for the co-op.

This process began more than three years ago when the membership was

informed that the board and management was studying the possibility of building a new headquarters facility to replace the aging facilities in Altamont.

Driving this study were factors including security, employees, equipment and materials, and simply having outgrown the space.

"We have a lack of warehouse space to store and layout materials for daily jobs," said Ron Holsteen, Twin Valley's Manager. "There is not enough garage space to keep vehicles under cover particularly in inclement weather. Our linemen aren't able to access pole

storage racks and larger equipment such as transformers with more than one truck at a time."

A couple of years ago, Twin Valley purchased property at

the intersection of Highway 59 and Highway 160. The co-op has also retained the services of Cooperative Building Solutions (CBS) to design a new headquarters facility. CBS specializes in electric cooperative buildings and has built several facilities in Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas.

After several months of study and design considerations, the board recently approved the construction of a new facility. Construction will start in this fall, and the employees anticipate moving into the new facilities in late summer of 2014.

## Kansas co-op officials take leadership roles at NRECA's Region 7 meeting

Several Kansans played important roles at the NRECA Regional Meeting held in Portland, OR, last month.

Earnie Lehman, Midwest Energy's President and General Manager, was a panelist during one of the general sessions. The program topic was Game-Changing Innovations: Three Trends that Could Rock our World. The discussion focused on the empowerment of the member-owners of the co-ops.

The panel discussed distributed solar generation, energy management services, and how social media provides two-way communication between the co-op and the member-owners. Lehman discussed the launching of Midwest



**Earnie Lehman (right), Midwest Energy's President and General Manager, visits with Martin Lowery, NRECA's Executive VP of external affairs, during the "Game-Changing Innovations" panel discussion at the NRECA Region 7 meeting.**

Energy's Facebook site. He said, "The key to using social media is the ability to have a direct response to members through Facebook." Lehman also reported how

his members have jumped to defend the co-op whenever anything negative has been posted.

Joe Conley, Kaw Valley Director, served as the state's representative to the Nominating Committee and proposed Nemaha-Marshall's Manager, Kathleen O'Brien, to be re-elected to the Resolutions Committee that handles Cooperative Management, Community and Employment issues. O'Brien was re-elected by the voting delegates and joins Dale Short, Butler's Manager, as the

other Kansan serving on these standing committees that craft final resolutions for consideration at the NRECA Annual Meeting. Short has another year on his first term as a member of the Regulatory Committee.

In addition, Bruce Graham, KEC's CEO, and Kirk Thompson, CMS Manager, were members of the Region 7 Resolutions Committee that considered and amended a number of proposals during the general session on Oct. 16. Graham chaired the Committee process and worked in advance with other states to craft acceptable amendments to several resolutions.

As Chair, Graham was also involved in finalizing the resolution recommendations from the stage during the meeting's final business session. Graham also presented the Kansas ACRE report at Thursday's PAC breakfast.

Thompson was also elected to his second three-year term as the CFC District 7 Manager-Director. Ron Holsteen, Manager at Twin Valley, graciously agreed to be on the CFC ballot, as well.



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*Rural Power* is published every three weeks on Fridays. This electronic version is provided to you as a service of KEC. If you would like to receive personal e-mail notice of this publication in electronic format or discontinue such notice, please email [sread@kec.org](mailto:sread@kec.org).